



## Virginia Resource-Use Education Council

P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, Virginia 23230-1104

Founded 1952

### Business Meeting Minutes, January 14, 2014

Meeting start: 10:00 AM    End: 4:00 PM

The January VRUEC business meeting was held at the VA Department of Forestry Headquarters, Charlottesville, VA.

***VRUEC Member Agency Representatives present:*** Carol Hopper Brill (VIMS), Aycia Crall (VA Master Naturalists), Lisa Deaton (VA Dept. of Forestry), Dee DeRoche (VA Dept. of Historic Resources), Greg Eaton (Claytor Nature Study Center), Alex Fink (Longwood University), Mike Foreman (DCR VOEE), Suzie Gilley (DGIF), Andrew W. Larkin (NOAA B-WET), Candace Lutzow-Felling (State Arboretum of Virginia/UVA), Sarah McGuire Nuss (VIMS), Bill Portlock (Chesapeake Bay Foundation), Ellen Powell (VA Dept of Forestry), Ann Regn (DEQ), Beth Sokolik (VA Soil & Water Conservation District), Tim Taglauer (NPS), Tamra Willis (Mary Baldwin College), Virginia Witmer (DEQ), Sonya Wolen (Danville Science Center), Anne Wright (VCU Rice Center), Barbara Young (VDOE), Carol Zokaite (DCR)

***Guests:*** Sheila Barnett (DCR VOEE), Joseph Baust (Longwood University), Stephanie DeNicola (Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District), Beth Hawse (VT-VA Cooperative Extension), Page Hutchinson (DEQ), David Ruble (DCR VOEE), Albert Reid (VA State University)

#### **I. Reports & Organization Business**

Opening remarks: Some members are not able to access Dropbox; Should we reconsider the method we use to share VRUEC documents?

Special Guest: Joe Baust, Center for Environmental Education, Longwood University

##### **1. Review of Minutes, submitted by Candace Lutzow-Felling**

Minutes for the June 4, 2013 meeting were reviewed, revised, and accepted as revised. Minutes are sent to all members through the VRUEC member Dropbox folder and the VA Naturally website, VRUEC link

Discussion: Need to schedule an annual web-based formal VRUEC meeting to follow-up on our vote to add additional meetings/year

##### **2. Treasurer's Report, submitted by Ann Regn**

Income: \$8652.03 (from grants); Total income for the year: \$16,452.03

Expenses: \$8535.36 (as reported on the Quarterly programs/projects report, Oct. 1, 2013-Jan. 13, 2014)

Current Balance: \$7754.18

Checking Account Report: A list of all disbursements made January 1 through December 30, 2013 also was reviewed.

The full Treasurer's report can be found in the VRUEC member Dropbox folder

The Treasurers' report was accepted as read.

Please let the Treasurers know if you would like to have VRUEC sponsor or help with expenses for EE related activities (conference, etc)

Treasurer's Report Accounts

M2B = Mountain to Bay Academy

MATCH: New budget category added

MWEE Mini-grants

WEI = Watershed Education Institute, Page manages; VRUEC is the fiscal agent;

Expenses = Income for this account (NOAA funded)

VAESP = VA Elementary School Principals, a 2013 project

VaN= EE conference expenses and income

VRUEC Admin = administration income & expenses (mainly for meetings)

See Page 2 of the report for Quarterly detail; lists what checks were written and what they were for; this report is generated monthly

Page 3: CORRECTION: \$400 spent for a VRUEC tablecloth was for the VA ESP conference, **not** the VAST conference

Mini-grants: folks who complete the WEI are eligible to apply for a MWEE mini-grant

**3. NAAEE Conference: Affiliates Report (Greg Eaton)**

The Affiliates is a network of representatives from states that are organizational members of NAAEE. Purpose is to regionalize national initiatives in EE & make them geographically pertinent

Recent Discussion and Role Play: How does poverty contribute to environmental perceptions and actions?

MARA- Mid-Atlantic Regional Affiliates (of NAAEE); collaborated on an unfunded EPA Capacity-Building Grant; Future collaborations planned; Desire to promote one-another's state conferences

**4. 2013 EE Conference & VA Naturally Report (Mike Foreman)**

**EE Conference.** Feedback received about the October 2013 EE conference at Orkney Springs:

- Musicians and dance was a great success
- Some controversy about the keynote presentation on fracking, but some lively discussion was generated; What is good EE? is an important discussion and to keep in mind when inviting speakers; Important to present balanced information on any EE topic
- Would like to have more folks attend the annual conference; Lower than expected attendance this year could partially be attributed the state VMN conference scheduled one week after the EE conference
- There was some discussion about combining VMN & EE conferences in the future
- Would be good to create an EE conference planning committee comprised of VA OEE staff, VRUEC members, and EE providers at large

**VA Naturally.** Web site is being updated in 2014; 1627 email addresses in the system; 1400 VaN partners; hundreds of thousands hits on the website/year; folks are obviously using the site

## **5. Fall 2014 Regional NSTA Conference in Richmond (Candace Lutzow-Felling)**

The conference theme is “Celebrate Science Inside & Out!” The three conference strands are (1) Watershed Science: Learning Inside and Out, (2) Partnerships & Collaborations: Learning Inside & Out, and (3) Integrating Science with Other Disciplines: Learning Inside & Out.

VA EE/VRUEC also has a special conference thread: “Get your nature on!”

Deadlines for conference presentations are in January 2014.

VA EE folks are organizing the “Get Your Nature On!” strand, recruiting volunteers to help with the conference, organizing conference field trips, seeking reduced or waved admission fees to local attractions, and are creating and staffing a booth in the exhibit hall.

### Discussion:

- There was some discussion about deadlines for the various conference components (presentations, field trips)
- MAMAEA is planning a reception at the Richmond NSTA conference
- Cost to VRUEC: no costs are anticipated. NSTA is providing the exhibit area, and conference meeting space as complimentary to the VA EE community.

## **6. Bay Academy M2B Report (Page Hutchinson)**

### a) M2B = Mountains to the Bay Watershed Academies

- New model: rather than a week long Bay Academy in the summer; 4 weekends dispersed through the year at 4 different host organizations is being planned
- Year 1 & 2, the focus is James River & the York/Rappahannock watersheds (year 2 & 3 the will add the Potomac River watershed)
- The first weekend session was at Graves Mountain Lodge; Lots of positive feedback received
- Two future session are scheduled for February: DOF hosting at New Kent Forestry Center & Green Adventure Project, Charlottesville
- Page Hutchinson is the Bay Academy Project Manager
- Need EE agencies to serve as mentors of the teachers who have participated in the Academies
- Need agencies to host Bay Academies in the future

### b) Watershed Educators’ Institute (WEI): VRUEC is a sub-recipient of the NOAA B-WET grant awarded to DEQ for MWEE implementation capacity building. This sub-award provides Mini-grants to WEI participants who complete a minimum of 30 hours of training.

## **7. Mid-Atlantic Chesapeake Bay Summit Report (Barbara Young)**

### a) Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool

Will help report outcomes in a relatively consistent way

### b) New MWEE definition (proposed)

Focus of the summit was using EE as an integrative concept; science, social studies, history; service learning

Use of environmental resources and impacts; regional focus; how does resource use affect students personally

Contact Barb Young if interested in sharing ideas for this integrative education project

**c) Collective Impact Meeting Report (David Ruble)**

Status of EE Data in VA:

How much EE occurs in Virginia? Difficult to answer because data collection is not standardized in VA.

Assessment of VRUEC Annual Report: 17 EE participants but the data is difficult to compare

Action to Improve Data Collection:

A meeting was held in December to develop a standardize data collection method for EE work in Virginia

Discussed (1) Types of Audience and (2) Type of Activity

Categories agreed upon: 4 types of audience & 5 types of activities

A Survey Monkey tool is being piloted as a data tracking tool

Conference call scheduled next week

Goals: What amount of EE activity is occurring and What is the impact of our EE activity?

- How do agencies with an EE and other science mission specifically pull out EE data?
- Need standardized data to conduct evaluations about EE impacts and for future grant applications
- Plans are to place the survey on the Va Naturally web site and to produce an annual report of EE activity in the state
- David will send VRUEC members the current tools being created and will invite all to participate in future conference calls

Discussion:

Would be useful to identify EE gaps regionally

Ought to include MWEE tracking reporting option in the survey

Duration of EE also important to track (another layer to consider in the future)

**d) NOAA B-WET Update (Andrew Larkin)**

1. B-WET Program for FY 2014

January 29, 2014: B-WET application deadline

\$2.7 million funding anticipated; of this amount on-going grants will receive \$1.7 million

\$1 million available for new projects: \$500,000 to systemic MWEE projects and \$500,000 to geography-integrative projects (geographic literacy emphasis), connect science & social studies

Max \$150,000/grant; minimum \$50K

2. Mini-grants for VA are now going through the Chesapeake Bay Trust

3. NOAA B-WET posters are available to VRUEC members to pick up at this meeting

**e) Regional Team Reports**

Three Rivers EE meeting at VIMS this week

Central VA Group has met monthly for the past 3 months for “EE Eats” at local restaurants

**f) Policy Committee Update (Bill Portlock & Tamra Willis)**

The VRUEC Environmental Literacy white paper needs to be voted on as policy agreed upon by VRUEC; The draft of this paper was sent to all VRUEC members in May 2013

Need a mechanism to disseminate the paper

The purpose of this white paper is to influence the development of an Environmental Literacy Plan for Virginia.

Executive order by the Governor is being explored for the next year or so

Motion: VRUEC adopt the ELP white paper as VRUEC policy.

Discussion: Can use the document to approach the Secretary of Education to support EE in Virginia

Action: Motion Passed

## **II. Announcements**

None separate from those in Old business

## **III. New Business**

### **1. New business not on the Agenda**

- a) ***Suzie Gilley:*** participation in the DC annual STEM event, April 25-27; need volunteers to staff and prep the exhibit with hands-on activities

Sifts are 3-hours long; Recommend signing up for 2 shifts; Exhibits need to be set up Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup>

At least 10 volunteers are needed to staff the 3 days of this exhibit

Cost: \$250 for exhibit space (VRUEC expense)

VRUEC cannot provide funds to support exhibit helpers (i.e., travel, lodging, per diem)

Motion: Move to authorize Suzie Gilley to spend \$250 to reserve an exhibit space at the DC STEM event; these funds will be spent ONLY if at least 10 people volunteer to help at the event

Action: Motion passed

- b) ***Page Hutchinson:*** Page needs to resign as VRUEC liaison to the VAST Board due to time conflicts.

It is important to have VRUEC representation on the VAST Board.

Stephanie DeNicola volunteered to serve as the liaison and attend VAST Board meetings. VRUEC members accepted Stephanie's appointment as the VRUEC representative on the VAST Board.

- c) ***All:*** Membership VOTE

Kendall Tyree (VASWCD) has relinquished her position on VRUEC to allow for other SWCD participation. Stephanie DeNicola has been actively attending VRUEC meeting for the past 2 years

Motion: Vote to approve Stephanie DeNicola to serve as a VRUEC agency representative for the VA Soil & Water Conservation District

Action: Motion Passed; Welcome Stephanie!!

- d) ***David Ruble:*** O.E McGelly Foundation (spelling?), Hosts a sports camp that incorporates environmental education

Camp sponsorship packages begin at \$1000; Should VRUEC sponsor?

Albert Reid and Beth Hawse will explore this opportunity with David

David will keep us informed as the discussions proceed

- e) ***Joseph Baust:*** Earth Month is being planned for Farmville, April 2014

Joseph will send more information as plans develop

**2. 2014 Calendar of Professional Development**

Please send all up-coming Professional Development program plans to Sheila to place on the VA Naturally web site.

**3. Member Roster Update & Projections**

Would be good to fill member agency vacancies prior to the spring meeting.  
The Membership Committee will meet immediately after the VRUEC Business meeting.

**4. Spring Meeting: Invitation to New State Administration (Ann Regn)**

Ann volunteered to find a meeting room and work with Sheila Barnett to schedule the spring VRUEC meeting. All VRUEC members should plan to give report. This meeting is the time to brief the new administration about collaborative EE efforts in VA and what individual agencies are doing.

State Administration and Agency heads are all invited to attend.

Meeting is often scheduled at the VA State Library, Richmond

Barb Young, Beth Sokolik and Suzie Gilley have volunteered to help organize the meeting.

Target date: week before Memorial Day

Idea: Highlight some EE programs around the state to display at the meeting

Send ideas to Ann and Sheila and let them know if you would like to help plan this meeting. VRUEC member agency reports are due prior to this meeting and will be summarized for the meeting.

**5. Needs Assessment RFP Results & Action (Suzie Gilley)**

Dr. Barnes (Barnes Technologies International in Harrisonburg) submitted the only proposal in response to the rfp to develop, administer, and analyze a VRUEC EE Needs Assessment.

If interested to serve as an advisor to the project, let Sheila know. Tim Taglauer and Alycia Crall volunteered to serve as advisors.

Meeting locations for the needs assessment focus group meetings are needed.

Contact Sheila if you can offer use of your facility for a focus group meeting.

1 focus group per VDOE superintendent's region will be scheduled.

**6. Strategic Planning Process (Mike Foreman)**

***Documents:***

(1) 2014 DRAFT VRUEC Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives

(2) Synopsis of VRUEC Strategic Planning Efforts, June 2013 to date

Organization structure and action is being rethought, especially how VRUEC collaborates with VA OEE.

Thoughts about the synopsis are welcome: Are we on the right track?

Need to form a VRUEC Strategic Planning Committee

Motion: Give the VA OEE and Executive Committee of VRUEC approval to carry forward with the Strategic Planning process as outlined in the above two documents.

Action: Motion passed

Would be good to form a second committee to discuss the development of a second EE organization; will discuss at a later meeting, after needs assessment is completed.

***Proposed VRUEC Vision and Mission:***



DRAFT Vision: An environmentally literate citizenry in the commonwealth of VA  
DRAFT Mission: Promote and facilitate Environmentally Literacy and resource stewardship through education  
To consider: Should the Strategic Plan help to determine the Vision and Mission statements?

## **7. Officer Roles & Responsibilities (Nominating Committee)**

Include VRUEC Committee Chairs in Executive Committee meetings; Need to change the By-Laws to state this; Or compose a Standing Rule that provides details for operating procedures for the organization; allows for evolution and flexibility as the organization changes; Helps to separate levels of process

Document: *DRAFT Job Duties: Virginia Resource-Use Education Council*

Describes responsibilities for all Council Members, Council Chair, Council Vice-Chair, Council Secretary, & Council Treasurer

If we continue to manage grants, should we add a position to fulfill this role?

Not ready to vote on this document; more discussion is needed; new VRUEC officers can review the document and suggest changes/additions

Need to discuss: What do we really need our officers to do?

Motion 1: Following election of the new slate of officers, these new officers review the draft VRUEC Member and Executive Committee duties document and suggest changes and/or additions.

Action: Motion 1 passed

Motion 2: Upon completion of the strategic planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee and the Executive Committee will review the Vision and Mission statements

Discussion: Vision and mission statements are important to guide the strategic planning process; need these statements first

Action: Motion 2 withdrawn

## **8. 2014 Officer Elections**

### **Ballot/Nominations**

VRUEC Chair (select 1): Sonya Wolen

Vice-Chair (select 1): Greg Eaton & Tim Taglauer

Secretary (select 1): Beth Sokolik

Treasurer (choose 2): Lisa Deaton & Suzie Gilley

Additional nominations were solicited; none were offered.

Discussion: Why two Treasurers? Need two names on the account; This is considered a best practice for non-profit agencies

Should we add a Membership Chair to the Executive Committee? No this is a separate appointment; The E.C. Chair makes this appointment; Should this appointment be considered by the Membership Committee?

Election Results: 18 ballots submitted

**Chair**: Sonya Wolen (1 write-in candidate: Carol Hopper Brill)

**Vice-Chair**: Greg Eaton

**Treasurers**: Lisa Deaton & Suzie Gilley

**Secretary**: Beth Sokolik

## **9. Committee Reports**

a) Spring Meeting Committee (Barb Young, Beth Sokolik, Ann Regn, Sheila Barnett)

Selection considerations for the spring 2014 meeting will be finding a suitable date for the cabinet and avoiding other education meetings scheduled for the spring

b) Policy and Environmental Literacy Committee (Bill Portlock, Tamra Willis, Page Hutchinson, Andrew Larkin, Elaine Tholen, Greg Eaton, Sonya Wolen, Cindy Duncan, Carol Zokaite, Joe Baust)

The Committee plans to research what environmental literacy programs there are in different states.

c) Membership Committee (Chair: Sarah McGuire, Members: Alycia Crall, Beth Hawse, Virginia Witmer, Sheila Barnett, Barb Young, Greg Eaton, Ann Regn, Lisa Deaton)

Created a list of action items:

- Membership Policy will be reviewed (last reviewed in 2002)
- Policy update regarding meeting attendance and membership needed
- Membership chair, role and who it should be—need to describe
- How to make meetings less exclusive
- How to include the EE Regional Teams in VRUEC business

d) Va Naturally Transition Team (Dave Ruble, Present but not formal members: Tim Taglauer, Greg Eaton, Ellen Powell, Stephanie DeNicola, Beth Sokolik)

Is there a need to develop a third EE association or to open VRUEC membership up to more members?

The Team will review other membership association policies and benefits of membership (products and services)

To grow, we need to be more open in our membership policy.

e) Strategic Planning Committee (Mike Foreman, Joe Baust, Suzie Gilley)

Goal is to wrap up the strategic planning process in 90 days

Will put out a call for folks to help with the planning process

f) Officer Roles and Responsibilities Committee (Carol Hopper Brill, Carol Zokaite)  
Additional ideas to spread the load for the chair: shift some duties to past-chair or Vice-Chair

Separate secretary tasks into recording of all meeting minutes and maintaining membership records

Need to check procedures/by-laws before making these changes

Broaden Executive Committee to include Standing Committee heads and Ad Hoc Committee Chairs

Officers would be able to delegate some responsibilities to these committee chairs

### **Closing Announcements:**

The next VRUEC meeting is being planned for late May-early June, 2014. Members will receive email notification of the next meeting place, time, and date.

Respectfully submitted,



Candace Lutzow-Felling, VRUEC Secretary (out-going)